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***The Outsiders***  
BY S. E. HINTON

  
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Note: All references come from the Speak edition of *The Outsiders*, copyright 1995.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 1

### Characterization

**Objective:** Recognizing how character traits are revealed

#### Activity

The characters are introduced in this chapter; it is important to know who they are so you can distinguish among them. The narrator tells the reader their ages, appearances, backgrounds, personalities, and things that are important to them in life.

1. Use the following charts to list information about each character. Each group should complete all seven charts.
2. After completing all seven charts:
  - You will either choose a character or be assigned one to report on. Use the chart to write an introduction for one person that could be used as a biographical entry in a book of fictional characters.
  - Each group will then introduce its character to the class. After the introduction, the class should discuss the information presented. Was it complete and accurate? Did it agree with the other groups' perceptions? Do other groups have any information to add, etc

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 1

### Stereotypes and Theme

**Objectives:** Recognizing stereotypes  
Considering thematic ideas

#### Activity

1. In small groups, discuss and write a description of the greaser and Soc stereotype.
2. Each group should make a class presentation of their stereotype of a greaser and a Soc.
3. Take a true/false survey of the class on the following thematic questions:
  - In any area, tension exists between the wealthy and the poor.
  - Gangs are necessary for protection.
  - Teenagers should stay with their own kind.
  - People should be judged, in part, by their appearance.
  - The way to stop violence is revenge.
  - Understanding is the key to acceptance.
  - Police should be tougher on gangs.
  - The strong should protect the weak.
4. For each topic in number three, divide into two groups: The people who answered true and those who answered false. Each group should plan its argument and prepare to debate the issue. *See Appendix on debating.*
5. Re-survey the class to see if there is any change in attitude after the debates.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters 4 – 5****Figurative Language**

**Objective:** Understanding how figurative language creates meaning.

**Activity**

Ponyboy often uses figurative language to make a point. For instance, in this chapter when the five Socs are coming at Ponyboy and Johnny, Ponyboy uses a simile and describes Johnny as “white as a ghost and his eyes were wild-looking, like the eyes of an animal in a trap.”

The literary term he uses is called a simile. The **topic** is Johnny’s fear and powerlessness. The phrase “like the eyes of an animal in a trap” puts a picture in the reader’s mind of a frightened, trapped animal. The phrase is used as a **vehicle** to help the reader understand what Johnny is experiencing. As readers see the similarities between Johnny and a fearful, powerless animal, they have an idea of Johnny’s feelings.

In small groups or pairs, discuss the figurative language listed. Complete the following chart to help understand the ideas suggested by the figurative language. The first one is done for you as an example.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 6****Inference**

**Objectives:** Inferring meaning from characters' behavior and from images in a literary text  
Relating literature to life

**Activity**

Imagine that the local newspaper of Windrixville will run a special section on the fire in the church. Each of your groups should choose a different article from the list that follows to write for this important section.

Articles to be included in the special section:

1. Article: Historic Church Lost in Fire; Describe the abandoned church and the surrounding area. Include a sketch or photograph (you can use a magazine picture) of how you visualize the church
2. A new article that deals with the kids who were trapped inside the church.
3. An article based on an interview with Jerry. Include a picture. In the story, use some quotes from Jerry.
4. An interview with Ponyboy. Include a picture. Write the interview so that it seems to include Ponyboy's thoughts and beliefs.
5. A human-interest article on being a hero. Your article should include a definition of what a hero is. In addition, you should apply your definition to Ponyboy and Johnny. Answer the question of whether they are heroes.
6. An article that reports the fire answering the who, what, when, where, why questions. Include the present condition and past circumstances of Johnny, Ponyboy, and Dally.
7. An editorial about the fire.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters 10 – 12****Plot and Characterization**

**Objectives:** Understanding plot structure, conflict, and conclusion.  
Interpreting the thoughts of a character.

**Activity**

Each group should complete both Conflict pages.

In Chapter 12, Ponyboy comes to conclusions about both his conflicts. First, after another argument with Darry, he has an even deeper understanding of his brothers and their relationships. Second, after reading Johnny's letter to him, he puts his concerns about being a hood in perspective.

Complete the questions that follow to show how Ponyboy comes to his conclusions about the two issues he has been struggling with. At the bottom, write your opinion of the conclusion of the novel.